(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHANTA KUMAR): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Import Duty was increased to 60% with effect from 9.2.2000 to discourage imports of sugar which were having an adverse effect on the domestic industry and keeping in view the comfortable domestic production and stocks and the falling trend in the international prices of sugar. It will also enable the sugar mills to pay the cane price dues of farmers in time.

Bamboo plantation project in Assam

*222. SHRI PRAKANTA WARISA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal under Government's consideration for taking up bamboo plantation project in rural and tribal areas of Assam;

(b) if so, the details thereof, district-wise and area-wise;

(c) the total outlays allocated for the same alongwith the present status of implementation of the proposal; and

(d) if not, what are the reasons for not taking steps in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) The Government of Assam has been asked to send a project proposal for bamboo plantation for a total cost of Rs. 2.00 crores. The project is awaited.

(d) Does not arise.

Assistance to Kidwai Memorial Institute of Oncology

*224. SHRI K.C. KONDAIAH: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have so far sanctioned any assistance for procuring equipments or medicines for poor patients or for construction of hospital building to Kidwai Memorial Institute of Oncology, Bangalore;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and